

Fun Family Activities to reinforce the story The Church at Thessalonica Acts 17: 1-9, and 1 Thessalonians 1: 1-10

Key Verse:

You received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers.

1 Thessalonians 1:6-7

The Point:

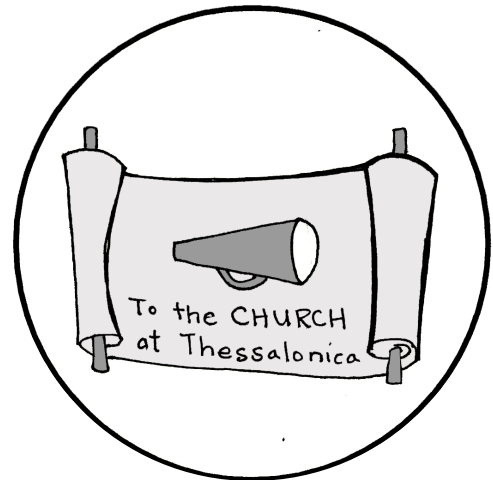
We are called to be examples of God's love to those around us.

Making Connections:

God Works through Us

Spiritual Practice:

Prayer



Background for Adults and older children:

Making Connections

The early part of Acts is full of familiar stories such as the dramatic coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the zealous prayers of the disciples, wondrous healings, the conversion of Saul, and Peter's unheard of dinner with a gentile, Cornelius. Peter is miraculously freed from prison. Barnabas and Saul set off to preach to gentiles, who are officially welcomed into the church at the Council of Jerusalem. Today we pick up on Paul's travels with Silas to Thessalonica.

Story Summary:

The Church at Thessalonica

Jesus turned the world upside down and offended people with his teaching. As Paul and Silas enter Thessalonica to proclaim the good news they, too, are met with mixed reactions. While some welcome the news and join in the praise, other people become jealous and start riots. They accuse Paul and Silas of treason for naming Jesus as king rather than the ruling emperor. When they are bailed out of their troubles in Thessalonica, they simply move on to share the good news in other places. Yet, Paul and Silas fondly remembered their visit and sent a letter back to Thessalonica to encourage the new believers. The letter reminds people who face adversity that they have been chosen by God and, in spite of any persecution they must endure, they have the gift of Jesus Christ and the promise of what is to come.

The Point

We are called to be examples of God's love to those around us.

Paul remembered the congregation in Thessalonica. He wrote letters to encourage their faith in spite of persecution and to remind them of the promises found in Christ. Sometimes it is hard to be the church. We need reminders that we are on the right track, and we need correction when we are wrong. Serving as an example to God's love can be difficult, but we work together to remain accountable and to be the witnesses that God would have us be.

Bible Nuts & Bolts:

Maps of Paul's Travels

Paul helped spread Christianity throughout the Mediterranean. Paul took three mission trips to share the message of Jesus with the gentiles. The first trip was to Asia Minor, what we call Turkey today. Paul took a second trip to Greece and Asia Minor. His third trip was also to Greece and Asia Minor. Paul helped found churches in many of the major cities he visited. Paul took a final trip to Jerusalem and was imprisoned. He then was transferred to Caesarea, before his voyage to Rome. Tradition has it that Paul was beheaded while in Rome around 62 CE. Many Bibles include maps in the appendices, which provide visual guides of Paul's missionary travels.

Spiritual Practice: Prayer

Paul practiced a powerful form of relationship building by noticing and encouraging the strengths that were evident in a community. Noticing people's gifts and strengths requires truly paying attention to them. It means not taking them for granted. Thanking God for one another's gifts builds up and supports the community.

Activities for Pre K—2nd Grade:

Post Office

Provide kids with mailing supplies such as paper, envelopes, stickers, bags, and shoeboxes made to look like mailboxes. Encourage them to write and deliver letters to their family members.

Tall Towers of Encouragement

Provide blocks for students to build towers as tall as they are able. Have students take turns being the “builder” and the “encourager.” Encouragers can offer support with helpful words or a hand to help steady a tall structure.

For All Ages: A Long Distance Alleluia!

Today’s story was about how Paul told others about God’s love by writing letters to them. Have you ever gotten a letter in the mail? How did it make you feel to get mail? Have you ever written a letter or made a picture to send to someone in the mail? I bet it put a smile on someone’s face to get that letter or art! Try this Long Distance Alleluia-

Take some time to think of someone that could use cheering up, or someone that may be in a senior care facility and cannot get out or have visitors right now because of the germs we are all avoiding.

Make some pictures or write a letter or make a card to send to this person. If you don’t have a name of someone, please let Julie Hanson know and she will give you names of people at our church that could use some friendly mail and artwork! The church would love to have cards and artwork sent to our senior members. It will brighten their day!

It’s exciting and fun to share God’s love with others, just like Paul did!

That’s an **ALLELUIA!**

I Thank God for You Game

Play a game of exploring differences.

1. Gather the family together in an open area of the room or yard. **We are going to play a game. I am going to ask what you like best and you will tell me by walking to *this side of the room* (walk to one corner of the room) or to *this side of the room* (walk to the opposite corner of the room.)**
2. **Let’s practice. You pick if you like vanilla ice cream more or chocolate ice cream more.** Direct family members who like vanilla more to one corner and those who like chocolate more to the opposite corner. Have them sit down in their respective corners.
3. Walk over to the people who like vanilla best, have them look at one another and say: **I thank God for people who are just like me!**
4. Repeat step three with people in the chocolate corner.
5. Walk in between the groups and have the people who picked chocolate face the people who picked vanilla and have them all say together: **We thank God for people who are different from us!**

6. Everyone can all stand up again.
7. Repeat steps 2-6 with other choices such as:
 - Do they prefer football or baseball?
 - Do they prefer the color red or blue?
 - Do they most like to play inside or outside?
 - People who have brown hair and people who have blonde or another color hair.
 - People who like to play musical instruments and people who don't.
 - People who are older than 6 and people who are younger. (or another age)
 - Make up your own as long as they remain interested and time allows.
8. **Paul told the people in Thessalonica that he thanked God for them. He was so happy that they had welcomed Silas and him when they visited. They had cared for one another. We care for one another too, even people who are different from us. Alleluia!!**

Closing Prayer

After each line, everyone says Alleluia. After Amen say Alleluia 3 times.

Dear God:

Thank you for sending Jesus to love us. Alleluia!

Help us to share your love with others just like Paul and Silas did. Alleluia!

Amen. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Bible Verses to encourage and give you strength:

Find these in your own Bible at home!

Do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed,
for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39

Sing Together:

Allelu, Allelu, Allelu, Alleluia

Praise Ye the Lord!

Allelu, Allelu, Allelu, Alleluia

Praise Ye the Lord!

Praise Ye the Lord,

Alleluia!

Praise Ye the Lord,

Alleluia!

Praise Ye the Lord,

Alleluia!

Praise Ye the Lord!

Window Decorations:

Write the words Faith, Hope, or Love on paper, big enough for people outside to see. Decorate the paper letters and put one of them on your window for your neighbors to see—or all 3 if you have room! Take a picture of you standing by your decorated window and send it to

pics@rosevillelutheran.org by May 12th.

We want to show them during our worship time together on May 17th. Invite your friends and neighbors to do the same!

Thank you!

Draw a line to connect all the letters to spell Alleluia

